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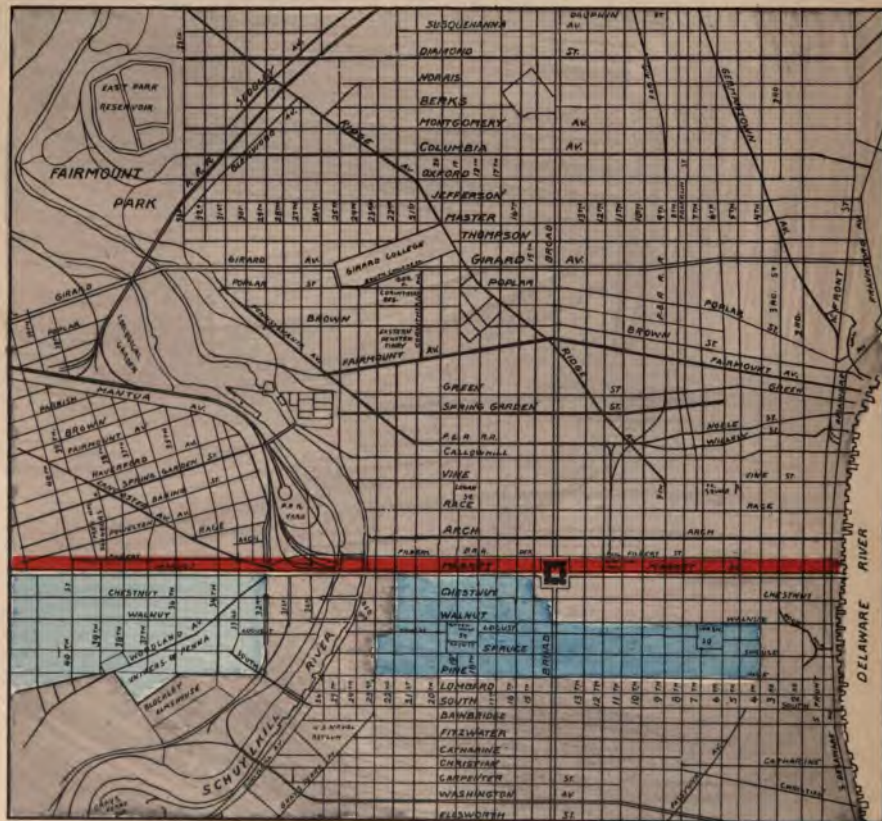




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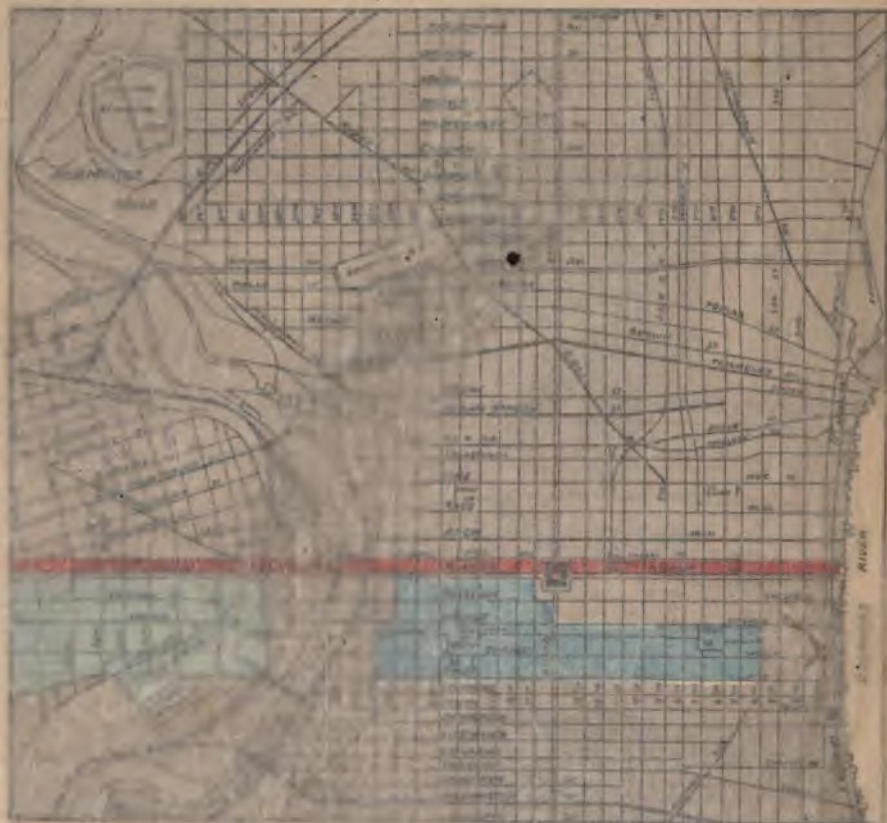


North of

Ben.

A New

Plan.



North of Market Street

Being the Adventures
of
A New York Woman
in
Philadelphia

[Handwritten signature]

PHILADELPHIA :
AVIL PRINTING CO.
MARKET AND FORTIETH STREETS
1896

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North of Market Street.

CHAPTER I.

THE reason we went to Philadelphia was because Helen wished to matriculate at the Woman's Medical College. She had her own reasons for preferring to be made a Doctor there, and I was thankful she did not go farther afield; for there is one good thing about Philadelphia, it is only two hours from New York, at the worst.

We are sisters. We are twins. We are old young women,—that is, we were, for I am writing of several years ago. We had been graduated

from a nice New York school. We had jaunted, more or less, through Europe and our own country. We had lived the lives of high-caste Bohemians. We have no near relations, except Aunt Ellen, and she is semi-detached, being the widow of an uncle. We could do as we pleased.

So Helen sloughed her skin of high-caste Bohemianism in a single night, and revealed the Altruist. Of course, like the seventeen-year locust, she had been getting ready for this a good while. I had seen the uneasy symptoms of detachment and was not surprised. Aunt Ellen was.

It is perhaps unnecessary to state that we are not tally-ho people. Mrs. Van Rensselaer is an old-fangled Knickerbocker, who was taken to her home on Stuyvesant Square over half a

century ago, as a bride, and has lived there ever since. On her drives, in her ramshackle coach, behind her obese and imbecile horses, she surveys the palaces in the new New York districts without wonder, or envy, or admiration, and returns to her roomy, shabby, comfortable, old mansion, which smells of heirlooms and lavender; sure that there never was such a house, or neighborhood, or trees, or grass, or sky, or birds, or minster of St. George.

Her husband was an abolitionist and an advocate of temperance when to be either was unpopular and to be both was sensational.

Her servants are ex-slaves and their children, George Washington Smith, Mrs. George Washington Smith, and their daughters, Jubie and Tribbie. My uncle bought the whole lot at a

slave sale, in New Orleans, before the war. He allowed the elders to choose their own names, by request, a sort of baptism into freedom. But he named the girls himself. Tribulation was always laughing, and Jubilation was always crying. I cannot see that they have grown any older since I was a child, only drier.

Helen and I have scarcely known any other home than the old house on Stuyvesant Square, where we had been taken as little children, after our father had died in battle and our mother of not being able to live without him.

As early as it was legally possible Uncle James put us in possession of our little competence, explained its investment, taught us to draw checks and to tremble at a high rate of

interest, and encouraged us to think for ourselves and act for ourselves. Soon afterwards he died.

Aunt Ellen was our friend, our adviser, our confidante. She indulged us in every reasonable whim. She gave us luncheons, and dances, and theatre parties; put in our way the gilded youth of the city, and when the gilding rubbed off gravely sympathized.

After Uncle James's death, she journeyed with us through Europe, and a little of Asia and Africa, and a good deal of America; and would have gone to New Zealand if we had so desired. But we didn't.

On her seventieth birthday she said, "Now, girls, that you are old enough to fend for yourselves, I mean to stay at home. I shall go to

Lake Mohonk one summer, and to Lake Minniewaska the next, and that is all the change I crave until I see your Uncle James again ; and then if he wants me to travel with him to Jupiter or Aldebaran, I shall be ready to go."

Soon after this, when Helen announced one morning, over our rolls and coffee, that she had decided to be a physician, and work among the poor of the Stanton Street district, connected with St. George's parish, Aunt Ellen threw up her hands with a fervent "*Nunc dimittis*." We have since found that this, or something like it, had been her ambition for us from the first.

If Aunt Ellen was disappointed because Helen did not wish to pursue her studies in New York, she did not say so. She agreed that it was best to go to Philadelphia at once,—it was

now May,—look over the ground, find a good boarding place (three wry faces), and make all arrangements for flitting in the fall. We asked her whether she would accompany us, and she said no; she would come on after we were settled, in order to make pictures in her mind of what we were doing; and she would ask Miss Polhemus to stay with her while we were gone. Miss Polhemus was an old school friend of Mrs. Van Rensselaer's, who boarded next door for the sake of being near her.

In two nights and a day we were back. Philadelphia had been hot. We had gone to the Hotel Lafayette, on a wide street, with a brutal mass of marble dumped in the centre of it called the Public Buildings, which destroys the symmetry of everything about,

including the long vista of the beautiful street.

We had taken a four-wheeler to the Woman's College, had seen the Dean, who answered our questions satisfactorily, and had found a boarding place with good points. It was a mile from the college, and would give Helen a constitutional on fine days, and an easy car route on wet ones; and it was ten minutes' walk from the Park, where I could get my daily sprint.

As soon as all these details were confided to Aunt Ellen she gave a whist party. The guests consisted of Miss Polhemus, who had not gone back to her boarding house next door; and of old friends of Uncle James and Aunt Ellen, who likewise had been friends of

our father and mother. These whist parties were grave occasions. They were always given just before the "Twins" had decided to do something different. On this night there was the usual solemn rubber, the dignified survey of the battlefield, by victors and defeated, after the bloodless fray; and then a little salad and strawberry and apollinaris supper, served in the big, cool dining-room. While the ices were being eaten there was a pause. The guests knew, from previous experience, that the "Twins" had their trunks packed.

"My niece, Helen, has decided to study medicine," said Aunt Ellen, sweetly.

In the scene that ensued we did not take a hand. On such occasions, Mrs. Van Rensselaer is an army with banners. After one of her

cavalry charges there are no wounded, but only the dead and the fled.

It was first thought that we had lost our little fortune. But commiseration yielded to indignation as soon as it was known that this decision was only another of Helen's whims. It was said that for a young woman to study medicine, in that state of life in which it had pleased God to place us, was undignified. This was the undivided opinion of the men. The women thought it improper; and one dear old lady whispered, under her breath, "immodest."

Aunt Ellen gently refused to discuss the point. "We are too old to fight over prejudices," she said; "we haven't the time left to outgrow them; and Helen is old enough to know what she wants, and independent enough to do as she pleases."

Then it was said, that, since auntie had devoted herself to us for the last twenty-five years, the least we could do, in common gratitude, was to devote ourselves to her for the next twenty-five. The "Twins" were warmly defended by Aunt Ellen. Then, if Helen must do such an incomprehensible, eccentric, unheard-of thing, why couldn't she study in New York, instead of roughing it, with her sister, in a strange city, in a boarding house? Helen quietly gave her reasons, which were, as usual, lucid and convincing. And then, all being very thirsty, we drank a friendly glass of apollinaris, and the talk flowed, quietly, around Philadelphia.

Aunt Ellen liked Philadelphia. She had never been there, but had always admired the stand

the Friends took concerning slavery and the temperance question. And the women were so beautifully, spotlessly clean, as they sat on the piazzas of the hotels, at various watering places. She had a niece who lived in Stainborough, one of the suburbs, she believed. She regretted not having seen much of her of late years. She would greatly enjoy visiting her, when she went to see the "Twins."

Mr. Maverick said there was only one way of getting into Philadelphia, and that was with your family tree in one hand, and a letter of introduction to one of the Patronesses of the Assembly in the other. Otherwise you were liable to be treated like a mulatto, particularly if you got into the wrong locality.

"By the way, where is your locality? Is it North or South of Market Street?" he asked, anxiously.

"I don't know," answered Helen. "It is on Grafton Street, about a mile from Girard College."

"Oh, dear, dear!" said he, in distressed tones, "that is all wrong. It should be two miles or two miles and a fraction, at least, if my memory serves. An inch, more or less, makes all the difference in the world, in your social position, in Philadelphia."

"We are not going there for social position," said Helen, laughing, "at least I am not; and I fancy Jane can find her level wherever she is."

"My daughter-in-law thinks Philadelphia is the most immoral city in the United States,"

said one old gentleman, who had not spoken before. "Oh! I don't mean in the sense in which you are taking it. I fancy they keep the Ten Commandments, there, a good deal more literally than we do in New York. But they have expunged the last half of the eleventh one from their creed, and from their experience. My son and his wife used to live in a quiet town in the Berkshire Hills, where he is partner in a paper mill. He found he could make a good deal more money by taking charge of the business in Philadelphia. He took his family there and settled in a fine house on North Broad Street,—beautiful street, but off color, it seems. The daughters went to Miss Dudley's school, and, by George! not a girl spoke to them; sent them to Coventry as completely as if their father were

serving out a life sentence in State prison, for murder.

“Bessie stood it for two years, and then she coaxed her husband to go back to Berkshire and let one of the other partners take his place, one who had no children. And she told him and his wife they would have a better chance of happiness in Camden, on the other side of the river; and, as he is a great yachtsman, they took her advice. The yacht is moored at the foot of their street, and they are quite satisfied, I am told. Bessie says she could not bring up her girls where prejudice and suspicion are in the very air they breathe. She says the down-town people despise the up-town people because they don't live down town; and the up-town people despise each other because the down-town people despise them.”

"Well, there is something queer about it," said Mr. Maverick. "It takes the most American city in America to be the most un-American."

"I fancy," said Aunt Ellen, "it is something like a New Yorker's prejudice against Brooklyn and Harlem. I suppose there are people who think Stuyvesant Square is off color ; but we old New Yorkers don't agree with them."

"No," said the old gentleman, "Bessie is a New Yorker herself, and she says there is nothing here like the arbitrary, geographical distinctions existing in Philadelphia."

"Well, I have always heard," said Aunt Ellen, "that the Philadelphians are clannish, and hard to become acquainted with, but when you know them, they are lovely."

Conversation died after this, and the whist party broke up, at midnight; amicably, on the part of Mrs. Van Rensselaer and the "Twins;" with indulgence on the part of their guests.

CHAPTER II.

WE spent the summer at Lake Mohonk, and went to Philadelphia in the beginning of the last week in September, so as to look about us, and be ready for the opening of the college year, October first. Aunt Ellen accompanied us; and as the house was not yet full she was able to be with us during the week, and help us wear away the first strangeness.

Number Blank-Hundred Grafton Street was a corner house, not large, but airy and sunny, with a brown mastic front, and brown stone steps; unlike, as we thankfully found, in look and

arrangement, the rectangular brick boxes that stretched, through dreary miles, in every direction. Our sleeping room was on the third floor of the extension, with a private bath; and our sitting room was a noble apartment on the second floor, with two windows in front and two on the side, and ample closet room. The house was spotlessly clean and furnished in simple good taste, the prevailing tints being soft grey.

At dinner, on the night of our arrival, Aunt Ellen asked for a glass of water, saying she preferred it to lemonade.

"Oh, that isn't lemonade," said our Quaker hostess. "We have just had the equinoctial, and the water always looks so, after a long rain. We Philadelphians are so used to the color that we don't mind it, but I notice strangers always

remark upon it. It has been analyzed over and over again by our physicians, and they say it is the purest drinking water in the United States ; always excepting, of course, spring water and the artesian wells."

Auntie did not dispute the statement, but after dinner we sought the nearest drug store, where she ordered several bottles of aquatone. That night we bathed in a decoction of weak coffee, and the next day Mrs. Van Rensselaer, with a thoroughness that distinguishes her most minute decisions, fitted us out with an approved filter for the bathroom faucets ; and, for our sitting room, a boiling apparatus, and a neat little article of furniture half filter, half ice-chest.

After settling our belongings and renting a piano, we went with auntie to the various places

of interest in Philadelphia. These consist of the Mint, Girard College, Independence Hall, the Academy of the Fine Arts, and certain localities celebrated in Revolutionary anecdotes ; and the Park, the big, breezy, shady, joyous, boundless Park.

At the Mint, Aunt Ellen was interested in nothing so much as the Widow's Mite. In Independence Hall she looked long at the Liberty Bell. At Girard College she gazed lovingly at the hosts of boys, of all ages and sizes, so well dressed, so well housed, so well fed, so well taught, so heart-bitten for that poor, small corner they once called "Home." "There should be more women here," was her sole remark, "boys need mothering." We went through the Academy of the Fine Arts at a rapid walk. I have

since seen some fine exhibitions there, but on that day there was little to admire. We went to the Revolutionary localities and looked pensive, and then laughed.

The Revolutionary localities are now centres of trade, and it is difficult to feel past-patriotic in the presence of the modern dray and the ancient dray-horse. Then we went to Blank's for an ice. As we were getting into the carriage again, we saw two fine-looking young fellows sprinting down Chestnut Street. "Give you my word," said one to the other, "I never was so glad to get back to a place in my life. That huge, shouting babel of New York is enough to stun a deaf elephant." Then we went to the Park, and gave ourselves up to a breezy delight; delight in noble trees, in soft, green

spaces, in a gently flowing river, and in wildernesses, seemingly so untouched and remote, that we almost expected to hear the war-whoop of the primitive Indian.

When we returned to the house, we found Nellie there, Aunt Ellen's niece. I had not seen her since her wedding, ten or eleven years back. She was married to one of the Talbot-Shrewsburys. We were told, at the time, that the family ranked high in Philadelphia; next in fact to the Norfolk-Howards. Her husband had woolen mills in Stainborough, and they were obliged to live there for business reasons; a fact which Nellie had always deplored in her letters to Aunt Ellen.

She greeted us cordially, and then burst out with,—“Oh, my, my, my, what a mistake you

have made! Why didn't you consult me about coming here?"

"What mistake, and what was there to consult you about?" said Aunt Ellen, with dignity.

"Oh, don't you know," said Nellie, "what a-a-an undesirable locality this is, North of Market Street? None of the nice, down-town people will ever call on the girls. A side street now, Eighteenth, or Nineteenth opposite Logan Square, would be bad enough, but Grafton Street! could anything be worse? Don't you think you could make a change before anyone finds it out? There are lovely boarding houses on Chestnut Street and Walnut Street, or they would be much better off in Germantown."

"Why, what sort of a place is Philadelphia?" said Aunt Ellen. "We are not in the habit

of consulting people about localities. This seems to me a very nice street, as streets go, for they are nearly all narrow, here. We are on high ground, with better air than they have on either Chestnut or Walnut Street, which are both too far away from the college; and Germantown is not to be thought of. Besides, I have always found that 'where MacGregor sits is the head of the table.'"

"Not in Philadelphia, auntie," said Nellie, with great resolution. "It is different from any place you ever heard of, in this country; and strangers coming here have to recognize that fact or go under."

"Under what?" said Mrs. Van Rensselaer. And then she dismissed the whole subject with a wave of her hands. When Aunt Ellen waves

her hands, it is, in her own circle, equal to one of Jupiter's nods ; and Nellie never ventured to bring the matter up again, in her presence. Helen and I heard of it, at short intervals, to the bitter end.

The next day we went to Mrs. Talbot-Shrewsbury's spacious and lovely home in Stainborough, and saw her husband and her two droll little boys. Lionel Talbot-Shrewsbury was a fair, corpulent man of about forty, with a kind, common face, and hair that grew on the top of his head in little tufts, like bulrushes on the banks of a sluggish stream. He seemed to have no intellect, sufficient intelligence, and a disposition of great sweetness. Nellie is fond of music, and as Helen had studied the piano in Berlin, with Kullak, and I had studied the

voice in Paris, with Marchesi, she was anxious to hear us. Helen played, and I sang; and when we had finished Lionel said, gently: "Well, cousins, I suppose that is very fine, but I never could understand anything in Q flat. Isn't there something simple you could give me?"

Helen executed the "Monastery Bells," with great finish and delicacy, and I sang "Bonny Sweet Bessie the Maid of Dundee." The good fellow thanked us for our performance, and said, simply,—“I always like to hear the ‘Monastery Bells.’ It reminds me of when I was a little fellow and my mother played it for me. She was one of the Renfrews of Germantown, a sweet woman. She died when I was only ten years old.”

We stayed two or three days, entertained delightfully. Mrs. Talbot-Shrewsbury was a fascinating hostess, her husband a ray of pure sunshine, and the children as droll as children can be and live. We ate and drank all day long, to our own condemnation, and far into the night; took romantic drives behind Lionel's spirited horses; and returned to Philadelphia in time to be present at the opening of the college.

That afternoon Aunt Ellen went back to New York, Helen began her studies, and I felt as though the bottom had dropped out of the universe.

CHAPTER III.

MATTERS settled themselves, for Helen, in the groove they were to keep for some years. Her desk was in one corner of the sitting room, having on it writing materials and a Rochester lamp, with, at her right, a revolving bookcase, full of bulky volumes. At night she sat there and studied behind a screen. Once I tiptoed across the floor and looked over it. Helen, with a green shade over her eyes, and a big book open before her, was carefully examining what looked like a shin bone of beef. On the desk was a skull, and some osseosities for which I had no name. I tiptoed back to

my seat, and after that the Bluebeard corner of the room knew me no more.

In Philadelphia art was mediocre, and music not to be had, except when Thomas gave his infrequent concerts. Humanity was, at present, not interesting. "Philadelphians are clannish, and hard to become acquainted with," I quoted from Aunt Ellen, "but when you know them they are lovely." I shall wait.

Meanwhile, some outside influence was absolutely imperative, unless I intended to become morbid; and morbidness, in the Van Rensselaer household, is the eighth deadly sin,—to be punished with a circle lower than Dante's lowest. Lucifer did have Judas, and Brutus, and Cassius for company,—excellent company, too, the Romans must have been,—and probably

there was some interesting conversation, between crunches, which made life not too dull for the lonely Judas; but a morbid person's hell is to feed on himself. Therefore, no morbidness!

The Rector of "All Souls," who had called upon us, suggested my helping the garment committee, at the parish house, once a week. So I presented myself, one day, as an applicant for work, and gave my name and address and reference—the Rector himself. I found about a dozen nice looking women, of all ages, engaged in cutting out and basting undergarments for the masses, of shapes which had, long since, been discarded by the classes. These were subsequently made up by women who were paid for their work, and were sold for the benefit of the poor of the parish.

I was received with polite forbearance by an elderly woman, evidently the chairman of the committee, who assigned me a place at the cutting table. No one said anything to me, but the women quietly chatted among themselves, about Johnnie, and Susie, and Tommie; Tommie, and Susie, and Johnnie; the choir, the altar committee, the Rector, and the Rector's wife. When the hour was over, the chairman dismissed me with a displeased nod. I went, once a week, all that winter, with precisely the same experience. I do not know why the women of the garment committee did not speak to me, nor what I had done to displease the chairman. It reminded me of when I was a school girl, and one of my teachers used to say to me, in austere tones, after one of my girlish pranks:

"Jane Van Rensselaer, I am not pleased with your manner." I looked over my manner, daily, pruned it, here and there, and polished it occasionally, but without success. I felt discouraged.

I walked every day, even pretty bad days, in the big comforting Park. I practiced and read diligently. I wrote long letters to Aunt Ellen and to old friends, and I tried to interest myself in the people of the house; one or two had possibilities.

The dreary streets affected me like a nightmare, and I used to go, frequently, to a synagogue in the neighborhood, and look long at the arabesques and the beautiful Moorish arches, and think of camels, and wish I was back again in the Syrian Desert, where we had been this time the year before.

Meanwhile some of the peculiarities of the city began to dawn upon me, gradually:—

The patient matter-of-course manner with which people sat, quarter or half hours, in the street cars, while coal was being dumped. After losing several trains, I learned to make allowance for possible or probable detentions, as others seemed to do.

The low voices in which shoppers gave their addresses when they lived above Market Street, and the joyous tones with which they frankly owned a not-too-far-down-town residence.

The way in which people knocked into you on Chestnut Street, and when you, willing to put yourself in the wrong, for humanity's sake, said, "I beg pardon," the look with which they glared at you, as if you had been personally insulting.

And when you politely held open the doors of shops, the way in which you were allowed to do it, without thanks or assistance, as if it were your avocation, and amply paid for at a dollar a day.

And the way late people crowded past you at concert, or opera, or theatre, without excuse or comment, as if you were a chair, and in the road at that.

Once, an annoyed looking elderly woman, who sat opposite me in a Walnut Street car, said to her companion: "Did you hear that Whiteley's son is to marry Fitz James's daughter?" A contemptuous sniff. "Don't you know the Fitz James' were in trade, way back? Blood will tell."

Once Helen and I were walking on Chestnut Street; said one pretty girl to another, "I should,

literally, rather die than live North of Market Street." These things we pondered in our hearts.

Meanwhile Helen was absorbed and happy, and when things became too dreary for me I fled to New York, to auntie and Miss Polhemus, and the "goodies"—our childish names for the servants—and the strong, salt air, and music, and old friends, and the alert, interested crowds, and the joyous life everywhere. Occasionally we went to Nellie's, and always with distinct satisfaction in her pleasant hospitality, her kind man, and her two sweet, droll, little boys. Christmas vacation and Easter vacation we spent in Stuyvesant Square, and the summer at Lake Minnewaska, with Aunt Ellen: and the first year wore away.

Mrs. Van Rensselaer always carefully renders to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's. Simply dressed, as a rule; no one knows better than she what is becoming to the *grande dame*. At the Queen's Drawing-room—where we had been presented, some years before—her gown, her jewels, her sunset beauty, her imperial dignity, attracted the attention of royalty itself, and were the adoration of the American colony in London. A patrician,—as position goes in this country,—she does not believe in rank, in any of its conventional meanings.

“We are very little people in this world,” she will say, “so little that it would take a microscope to define our littleness. In America, our ancestors were all middle class: if they were not, then they fell below it. In Europe, the founders

of great families were nearly always merely stronger and more brutal than their fellow savages. Here the evolution goes on from frieze to broadcloth, from broadcloth to evening suit, from evening suit to poverty; but not a shirt-sleeve poverty. Some of the nicest people I know have been rich, and are now in reduced circumstances. They have all the advantages of wealth, without its too often snobbish and arrogant assumption and selfishness."

Helen and I are friendly people. As children we were taught that friendliness is the brevet of friendship, and that friendship is rare and exclusive, but possible. We have delightful acquaintances and correspondents all over the world, from Darjheeling to Madras; from Singapore to Yokohama; from Tiflis to St. Petersburg;

from Naples to the North Cape ; and all across the American continent, and some of the islands of the sea. We had learned when we were children to be friendly and helpful for the minute, for the hour, anywhere ; being in this world "guests of a day and travelers that pass."

In thinking it over, it seems to me that Aunt Ellen grasps the proportions of things better than anyone I have ever known ; our littleness, our helplessness, our glaring, electric light, Nineteenth Century ignorance ; the mystery of our coming and going, and our pathetic, mutual, human needs.

Accustomed to large ways of looking at life, still further enlarged by extensive travel, the provincial inside-of-a-teacup view of things I had so far found in Philadelphia saddened and wearied me inexpressibly.

Helen was happy in her work and in her companions, and many a Saturday night was enlivened by chafing-dish suppers, to which flocked her fellow students, bright interesting women; some of them so young, some of them so old; from India, from Palestine, from China and Japan, from the Sandwich Islands and Australia; and from every State of the Union; and an Indian princess from the wildest and wooliest West. They chattered of lectures, and quizzes, and professors, and examinations, and laboratories, and darker mysteries, with an occasional polyglot flavor of incident and anecdote, that had an endless charm.

Helen was happy, but for me the problem of life, for the next two or three years, had yet to be solved.

CHAPTER IV.

THE boarders at Blank-Hundred Grafton Street were, with one or two exceptions, nice, ordinary people, with whom I held nice, ordinary intercourse. One of the exceptions was a young woman whom I found installed there, on my return, the second year. We soon became acquainted. Her name was a familiar one, being the same as that of a well known philanthropist in one of the Eastern States. I subsequently found that she was his niece.

Miss Alden had traveled extensively in Europe, and had studied while there. On her

return, after some preliminary coaching, she had entered Bryn Mawr, during its first year, somewhat later than girls enter college now, and had been graduated.

She was a tall woman, dark, slender, and strong as a pine tree, and with something of its wholesome, tonic effect. Not in the least pretty, she had that much better quality, an interesting face, a fine, frank manner, observation, discrimination, and decided common sense. She was as enthusiastic a pedestrian as I, and we took long walks in the Park every Saturday morning.

"I can't help wondering, Miss Van Rensselaer," said she one day, "how you come to find yourself in Philadelphia, and what you are doing North of Market Street."

"I might ask the same question of you," I answered, laughing. "I am here because my sister is here, and I have not yet been able to grasp the mystery of Market Street. Perhaps you can tell me."

"I am here," said Miss Alden, "because, after my father and mother died, and my sisters and brothers married, Bryn Mawr seemed more like home than any place in the world, and I wanted to be near it. I can work, here, without too much wear and tear, for there are no distractions. The vacations are long, and I flee utterly away and forget that Philadelphia exists. I live North of Market Street because I can save some dollars a week by it. I like to go across, just so often, to freshen up a bit, and this helps. And I can hoard my little patrimony for my old age.

“ But no outsider ever feels at home in Philadelphia ; and, as near as I can find out, no Philadelphian ever feels at home anywhere else. There are decided objections to the butter, ices, and fancy cakes of the outside world ; and who there knows how to cook terrapin ? .

“ About this North of Market Street business—I saw a good deal of it in Bryn Mawr. The cleavage was as distinct as the brass line of the equator, on a globe. But as my friendships were with North of Market Street girls, I didn’t give the subject much thought, except to notice that the ones on the other side of the line seemed stiff, and uninteresting, and arrogant. I didn’t know why and cared less. There were little jokes flying about, tipped with sarcasm, that I didn’t understand then, though I do now.

“Harriet Martineau says, in her ‘Travels,’ that on Chestnut Street the grandfathers had made the money, and on Arch Street the fathers; that about describes the whole business. Then, it seems that a dozen or so of vulgar people, who had made fortunes, as army contractors during the war, built some splendid mansions on a wide street, north, and that has banned a high, wholesome district of several miles square. Hundreds of nice, quiet people live there, in a nice, quiet, old-fashioned way, who have been steadily getting richer and richer every year; whose grandchildren have had every advantage, are handsome, well bred, traveled, have enlarged ideas, and are well received everywhere; everywhere except South of Market Street, where they are socially ostracized.

elsewhere, send their girls on long visits to their relations, and pray for foreign entanglements.

“Some nice people from the South moved here a year or two ago. They bought one of those lovely houses on Spring Garden Street. They have one child, a little girl of about eight, who was sent to Miss Dudley’s school. Last spring the family went to the Somerset Arms, in the suburbs; a great resort for those who do not care to go far afield till July or August.

“The society women decided to get up a dance for the little folks. As it happened, they all lived south of the line except Betty Lee. Some of the tender-hearted women were puzzled what to do, and advocated including her. But the acknowledged leader said ‘No, we have our rules, and we cannot break them even for nice

It is higher, pleasanter, the air is better, there are two or three wide streets. Even when they know of the local differences, they do not think them of sufficient importance to weigh against obvious advantages. And then, when they find themselves dropped by old friends whom they have had south of the line; their children sent to Coventry, in the down-town schools; and realize the whole social-malaria condition, generally; they do one of several things: They either go back where they came from; quietly acknowledge their mistake and move within the sacred precincts; go to one of the little outside towns and are known as the county families; or stubbornly stay where they are, acquire the shut-in manner, place their children away at school, try to get their boys into business,

must give the next dance to Miss Maverick.' 'Awfully sorry, Mrs. Winthrop, but I've promised it to Martie; why I've known her ever since she was so high,' and he pranced off. Now what do you think of that?

"The trouble with Philadelphians is, they huddle too much, whether on the piazzas of the hotels of their own chosen watering places, or in their own drawing-rooms. They dislike new ideas, new places, new people. They like what has been, the usual, the mediocre. One of the Norfolk-Howards has well said, of her own set, that 'they feel a cold and sullen resentment toward anyone who rises head and shoulders above them.'"

"But," I said, "I have always heard that Philadelphians were so hospitable to strangers. It

has almost passed into a proverb." Miss Alden laughed amusedly.

"Yes, I know, but I've not seen anything of it. When there is hospitality it is a clan obligation. Connections or their friends come with a regular letter of credit, which is duly and generously acknowledged to the last farthing. But that sweet and spontaneous welcome to friend and to stranger at unexpected times, which we know and love in the East, is absolutely unknown here. Clan obligations to their own? yes! But is that hospitality? Here the angels are duly stamped and labelled and heralded. They never come unawares.

"I don't know how teachers fare in New York, but in Boston they were the idols of our childhood and girlhood, and if we could get them

to come to us for a drive, or a dance, or a dinner, or an outing, we were way up with delight. Here many of the girls won't speak to me on the street. None of the older ones do. I am their social inferior. It wouldn't be good form.

"Of course there is the 'smart set' in every city, the 'Four Hundred' in New York, for instance, who live in a semi-ducal world, and look upon all other Americans as barbarians, having only just emerged from the wilds themselves. Nobody cares for them or takes them into consideration. But what is called the 'nice set' elsewhere has no counterpart here. The standards are so widely different. Nice people, in Philadelphia, are those whose grandfathers were born south of Market Street.

They may live in little shabby houses, be utterly without distinction, narrow, unintellectual, uninteresting, unprogressive, but they are received everywhere, in the smart set and out of it, their claims allowed, their position impregnable. 'We are the people, and wisdom has died with us, but we know just where we are, and where our fathers and our grandfathers and our great grandfathers were,' and so back to the dull, stolid London merchants, from whom most of them are descended. And what makes me 'foam at the mouth' is, that if you are at all friendly or cordial the true Philadelphian immediately thinks that you are after something; that you want hospitality, or patronage, or to be taken up. They can't conceive that the jumping-off-place of your desires is a little

common civility; the 'ship ahoy' of the friendly mariner."

"But don't the up-town people ever move south of Market Street?" I asked.

"Scores of them," was the answer, "and with this effect: So far as they, personally, are concerned, they might as well have stayed where they were. But there is a saving grace in repentance. They are held to have repented of their sins and to have shown a desire for amendment, always a heavenly thing to witness. Their children gain by it. They may be as Knights, and their grandchildren as King James's Baronets, in this curious Philadelphia nobility, of South of Market Street creation. You Knickerbockers are pinchbeck by comparison.

“Do you know, that the limits of the well-bred district are distinctly outlined? About a mile and a quarter long and a half mile wide; and without are ravening beasts, and within it is called ‘Paradise.’”

“But how about West Philadelphia?” I asked. “That seems to me a beautiful part of the city, so open and breezy, and with such pretty houses and fine shade trees.”

“Oh, West Philadelphia is divided also; North is, of course, a part of the Great Taboo. South it is blue if you have piles of money; if not it is not black and not blue, but a beautiful bluish grey.

“One of the teachers at the school came the other day looking terribly distressed. She is a well-bred young woman, with strong

common sense, and when I asked her what the trouble was: It seemed that during the absence of the daughters in Europe that summer, the mother, smelling malaria in their residence, had unfeelingly moved from 136 South to 136 North on the same street, in West Philadelphia.

“‘I assure you,’ said Miss Douglas, laying her hand on her heart, ‘I thought it would kill me to see “North” on my visiting cards. Such a thing has never been known in our family.’

“And once Miss Dudley asked me to see a stranger for her. She proved to be a teacher of the banjo, but I mistook her for some one else, and said, ‘Oh, you are the one who called here the other day from Mount Vernon

Street, to see about——’ ‘I never,’ said the young woman, in accents that trembled with indignation, ‘I never lived above Market Street in my life.’ I soothed her as best I could, I deplored my fatal mistake, I even offered to take lessons on the banjo, but all in vain, I have made an enemy for life.

“Oh, yes, you can laugh. It’s very ridiculous, I know, but it’s very heart-numbing, too. Personality counts for less, here, than anywhere else in the United States. Position is a geographical distinction, and multitudes are blessed or banned in districts.

“It is assumed that all the dwellers in the Great Taboo are raw, vulgar, ignorant, undesirable. There is that element everywhere, South of Market Street, just as well as North; of

course there are crowds of uncultivated people in that huge district, up town ; and with them, crowds of as lovely families as you ever knew ; and scores, too, of Eastern people, who are the Brahmins of their own home, and here are anathema. It is funny to see their disgusted bewilderment when they realize the state of things around them.

“ The boast of the city is that money carries no weight with it, whatever ; other considerations prevailing. In the first place, this is untrue. An enormous amount of money will go just as far, here, as it will anywhere else, unless the owners are positively barbarous. Besides, money in the second and third generations brings refinement and enlargement. It is bound to. What does a locality standard give ? Increased

narrowness. Philadelphia is a big place, and thousands of quiet, unambitious people live North of Market Street, and are dense to conditions; and find all the distraction and society they care for in their churches. And thousands resent, bitterly, the false position in which they are placed.

“It is curious, too, to watch the beginnings of the social malaria that infects the whole city. Last year two sweet, little girls came to Miss Dudley’s, who showed unmistakeable marks of culture and refinement. But they were frozen out of the society of the rest of the school as completely as though they had been the children of a coachman. The little things looked so hurt and astonished, and clung to each other so pitifully, at recess, that I ached for them.

"I said to one little miss : ' What is the matter with the Lake-Shore children, that none of you speak to them ? Do they live on a wrong street ? '

" ' Oh, the street is good enough,' she answered, pertly, ' but we don't know who they are ; and our mammas don't like us to associate with girls, unless we know who they are.'

" On inquiry, I learned that the Lake-Shores were a New York State family, who had settled in Philadelphia, and, feeling quite sure that I should, at least, not be snubbed, I called. I found that they were wealthy people, who belonged to the nice set of Buffalo. Mrs. Lake-Shore was refreshingly cordial, and we laughed, heartily, over some of the peculiarities indigenous here. She said she felt sorry for the children, but they had come to Philadelphia to stay, and

they must accustom themselves to conditions and live them down. She said that she and her husband had been received cordially enough and she thought she should be very happy here. On pressing the matter farther, she acknowledged on second thoughts, that their friends were not Philadelphians, but people from other places who had lived here for many years.

“Not long after the Lake-Shores took me for a drive. We went out Broad Street, and Mrs. Lake-Shore remarked upon its beauty. ‘Yes,’ said her husband, ‘this is a beautiful part of the city, but you know no one lives here.’ You see how the poison works. Already, these strangers assumed what all South of Market Street assumes; when I happened to know that the northern part of the city is dotted with homes

of Eastern people who have just as good a claim to family and position as anyone in the United States; and with Philadelphians of culture and delicacy, who would be gladly welcomed among the ranks of nice people, anywhere else."

"I should think," I said, "that the North of Market Street people would combine against such manifest ignorance and insolence."

"They do. They combine in churches. Every church is a centre of society life, amusement, and intelligence. They have their weddings, their fairs, their concerts, and lectures, and sociables. And dances are given by the boys and girls and the eligible young men and women of the congregation, just as it is in a village. But can't you see that it makes of

Philadelphia not a city, but a string of villages, with village gossip and village narrowness?"

"But do you mean to say that there is no common ground where the people can meet and be human? Where is the University set?"

"There is no University set, such as we know it in Boston, such as you know it in New York. There is no common literary and social centre, like the President's house at Harvard or Columbia. There is no President.

"There are, however, a society and some clubs here, where bright members of the opposing factions meet and admire each other, and discuss literature and the topics of the day on as broad a basis as they do anywhere else. These are the Browning Society, the New Century Club,

the Contemporary Club, and others. Between them, they give me lots of amusement, and unlimited material for my favorite study, that of human nature, under absolutely unique conditions. You will be here such a short time that it would be hardly worth while for you to join the Century, and I can get you a card for the Contemporary, from my cousin, whenever you would like to go; but I do think you would enjoy the Browning Society. The meetings are like lottery tickets, sometimes you draw a blank, and sometimes you get an uncommonly good thing. Do let me propose you."

I told Miss Alden I would think of it. When I got home, I tried to get Helen interested in the various types of Philadelphia peculiarities that I had heard of that day. But she was

studying rhizopods, and could not lightly turn to anything so recent. So I waited till I could see Aunt Ellen. Dear *sympatica* Aunt Ellen, who would be interested in shoestrings, if shoestrings interested me.

CHAPTER V.

WE were talking at the table, one day, about the local distinctions, and Mrs.

Atlee said they were not recognized by the Friends. This seemed to me quite in keeping with what I had seen and heard of their quiet, good sense in other things. "Many of the descendants of the original Friends have adopted thy faith," she said to me, smilingly. "But we do not consider ourselves responsible for their degeneration in that, or in anything else."

Miss Coutts said: "I am from Pittsburg, but I am so unfortunate as to possess a Philadelphia, Revolutionary historical name. One day,

at a hotel in Atlantic City, I was startled by hearing some one in the next room groaning, as if in great pain. I knocked at the door and asked if I could be of any assistance, and a faint voice said, 'Come in.' I entered, and found an old lady lying in bed, evidently suffering acutely. I began trying to make her more comfortable, when she gasped, between groans, 'What name?' 'Coutts,' I answered. 'Which Coutts?' 'My grandfather was a green grocer, on Second Street,' I shouted, and fled, sending a maid to her assistance." We all laughed.

I went to the Browning Society, one night, and liked it, and joined it. As Miss Alden had said, sometimes you drew a blank, and sometimes you got an uncommonly good thing. The men and women were bright and interesting,

and said witty things, on the spur of the moment, and read wise papers, and chaffed each other, and were as spontaneous and natural, and human, as though they lived somewhere else.

The next Summer Aunt Ellen invited Miss Alden to spend a couple of weeks with us at Lake Mohonk. We were much attracted by a young, distinguished-looking woman, who was there with her little girl and a nursery governess. Her name was Mrs. Farquhar. "I knew her grandfather, well," said Aunt Ellen. "He was minister to France, some years ago. Your Uncle James and I have entertained him many a time."

The next morning, as we were all seated on the piazza, with our books and work, the

Duchess of St. Albans, from Philadelphia, who was near Mrs. Farquhar, turned to her and said, in distinctly audible tones: "Mrs. Farquhar, who was your grandfather?" "I never had a grandfather, Duchess," said Mrs. Farquhar, sweetly; and she went on with her reading. The Duchess looked insulted and left the piazza.

That night Mr. Maverick ran up from New York, with Lord Cloverleaf, for a few days. It so happened that Aunt Ellen and Helen and I had known him well in England, and Mrs. Farquhar had been entertained by his mother when she was a bride. Aunt Ellen spoke to the latter, and made the necessary introductions, and we all spent a very pleasant evening together; especially as it turned out

that Miss Alden and Lord Cloverleaf had mutual friends.

The next day the Duchess sidled up to Mrs. Farquhar, and said, in a giggling, girlish voice: "Oh, you dear, naughty, delightful creature! What made you say yesterday you had no grandfather? You gave me such a turn." "I told you the exact truth, Duchess," said Mrs. Farquhar, with dignity; "my grandfathers both died before I was born." And she walked away.

She said afterwards to Aunt Ellen, indignantly: "My dearest friend went to Philadelphia to live, a few years ago. This woman had been treated with the greatest hospitality by her parents, in Charleston, for the Duke's sake. You know what a fine man he was?"

“Well, Mary, in her cosmopolitan ignorance, moved outside of the pale. The Duchess sent word to her, by a mutual friend, that she would be very glad to entertain her at lunch, any day, but that she, herself, could not call, since my friend lived North of Market Street.”

“Did your friend stay in Philadelphia?” I asked. “Oh, no! nice people can’t be forever explaining themselves, and warding off blows. She moved away.”

CHAPTER VI.

IN the third year of our residence in Philadelphia, the Talbot-Shrewsburys took a furnished house on Park Lane. It was tiny, and shabby outside, and a cozy and luxurious nest inside; and in relation to its position in "Paradise," it was on the near right of the throne. Soon after the family was installed there, Nellie invited us to dinner; Helen was too busy to go, as usual, but I accepted, gladly. The Talbot-Shrewsburys were delightful people to visit, and the droll little boys endlessly interesting.

I found the usual family party, with the addition of Clarence Talbot-Shrewsbury. He was

the exact opposite of his brother, small, dark, thin, with a big fierce nose, and the alert look of a capable business man, a man who cared much for business and for nothing else. He sat beside me at the table, and I soon found that we were all in the centre of a very dark and a very damp cloud. While Nellie was dressing the salad, I tried to talk to the brothers, but failed. Lionel seemed worried, and Clarence looked as though he was testing a new formula for the making of sulphuric acid. He listened coldly to my remarks, but refused to look at me, and made his curt replies to a little boss on the end of an old-fashioned mantelpiece, opposite. By following his eye, I was enabled to locate my words in precisely the same spot, and so we got on

with less confusion than seemed at first possible. The children chatted and asked questions endlessly. They had quite a little holiday of naughtiness.

It was always a picture to see Nellie dress salad; the lettuce was allowed to smell an onion and digest a chive. The oil and vinegar, and pepper and salt were all so beautifully proportioned, and so gracefully distributed. But tonight she looked hot and nervous. She forgot the salt, put in too much pepper, and bungled over the vinegar; the result was a little strangling. Clarence tasted a leaf and put down his fork with the air of a man who is angry and sins not, but prefers to put clamps on himself, for business reasons. Lionel and I ate ours, slowly, and with frequent and furtive sips of

water in between. Ices were a diversion and coffee a boon, and when Nellie and the children and I left the men to their nuts and wine the drawing-room seemed like green fields beyond a swelling flood.

"Did you ever know anything like the bungle I made of that salad?" said Nellie, sinking exhausted on a divan. "And Clarence is so particular. He is always telling about the salads at his club. They have a French chef."

"What was the matter, Nellie?" I asked. "Your salads are, usually, 'beyond the beyant,' but to-night there was just a little too much vinegar."

Now Nellie is nothing if not frank. If she were staying at Windsor she would not hesitate to tell Queen Victoria that she thought her too

dummy. And if she were a visitor at Sandringham, she would suggest Banting to the Prince of Wales. So it all came out.

"I'll tell you just what the matter is," said Nellie. "You know the Talbot-Shrewsburys are a very stiff family, oh, stiffer than McCallum More, and Clarence is the stiffest of the lot; and he came to dinner, unexpectedly, and Lionel and I have been on pins and needles for fear he would find out that you lived on Grafton Street. If he should, there is nothing under the heavens would convince him that you are nice. You know what these Philadelphians are. And we are all so fond of you. And it is so eccentric and headstrong in you. Why, with your income, you might live at the Stratford, and keep a brougham; and the coachman could

drive Helen to her—her studies, every morning, and go for her again in the afternoon.

“And while I think of it, you mustn’t be offended if I don’t ask you and Helen to meet anyone here. It wouldn’t be pleasant. You would only be snubbed. I know it must seem barbarous to you. I thought so, too, when I first moved here. But you have to take things as you find them. You have to accept the standards of the people you live with, and here *the* standard is Market Street. You and Helen can come to our quiet Sunday dinners, and we shall enjoy each other, thoroughly, and not be bothered with any of these horrid Philadelphia peculiarities.”

“Thank you,” I said, amiably, and I made a kind excuse to leave, before the gentle Lionel

and the fierce Clarence returned to the drawing-room.

It was many months before I saw Nellie again, and then, for Aunt Ellen's sake, I went to a Sunday dinner, where there were no Philadelphians, and there was no danger of my being snubbed, and the Talbot-Shrewsburys were as comfortable as usual, and the little boys as droll.

After dinner, Nellie suggested our going to "All Souls," for afternoon service; and after that, she asked me if I would mind calling at Clarence's door for the children.

At Clarence's door, however, it was discovered, that they had gone to Clarence's mother-in-law's, half way down the block, and we followed them. There Nellie, on being pressed,

entered, and I followed, meekly, as became my locality. The house had the usual shabby exterior of old Philadelphia houses, and inside it seemed the abode of refined people in rather straitened circumstances. Needless to say, the position of the house was just what was most becoming to the dignity of Clarence Talbot-Shrewsbury's wife's mother.

There were two ladies in the drawing-room, Mrs. Plantagenet, and her daughter, Mrs. Tudor. The elder woman was tall, slim, and grey-haired, with a searching dark eye, and an expression cold and suspicious. The younger woman was short, and fat, and dark-haired, with a dull blue eye, and an expression cold and suspicious. When I was presented to them they each lifted eyebrows, with a look that said :

"We don't know who you are. We don't want you. You are not welcome, but you may sit down." I sat down. The call lasted half an hour. I heard many things about many people, things I ought to have been glad to hear, for was I not listening to the Elect discussing the Elect? But as I sat on the sofa, away from the group, I was as much of a spectator, as little a part of the setting, as though I had been one of an audience at private theatricals.

When we arose to go, I bowed, and again two pairs of suspicious eyebrows were lifted, with an air that said: "We don't know who you are. We are glad you are going. Don't come again."

"Well, Nellie," I said, when we reached the street, "what's the matter there? do they know I live on Grafton Street?"

"Oh, dear, no!" said Nellie. "I shouldn't have dared to take you in, if they had known that. They are very distinguished people. They have lived in the same house, I can't tell you how many generations. That is their usual manner to strangers. They don't know who you are."

"But I should think my being with you would have vouched for me."

"My dear Jane," said Nellie, "I am a New Yorker. Try as hard as I may, I can't quite conform to their standards, and they are always a little suspicious of me. If you had gone with Clarence, now, it would have been all right. He never makes a mistake, and you would, simply, have been charmed with them. Mrs. Plantagenet and her daughter are lovely."

I said good-bye to Lionel and Nellie, that day, and kissed the two little Talbot-Shrewsburys, droll, delightful little things. I have not seen any of them since.

CHAPTER VII.

WITH Miss Alden's cheerful companionship, and some charitable work which she placed in my willing hands,—which she was obliged to forego, on account of a pressure of school duties,—with the Browning Society, and an occasional visit to one or two of the Clubs, and with frequent runs to New York, I managed to weather through my third year, very comfortably.

The next summer, at Lake Minnewaska, in the warm darkness of a remote corner of the starlit porch, Aunt Ellen spoke to us gently, and seriously, but not sadly, of the Inevitable.

"I am getting to be a very old woman," she said, "and my time is short. My children must accustom themselves to the thought of parting, must console themselves with the blessedness of the sure hope of meeting." We kissed the dear hands, in the darkness, but dared not trust ourselves to speak. A world without Aunt Ellen would be a world without a sun.

She then went on to unfold her plans. We had long suspected that Aunt Ellen's right hand had been very busy and her left hand very blind. Now we knew it. But spite of this, because of her simplicity of life, and because of the natural accumulation of great wealth, her fortune ran up into many millions.

"I have settled on each of you two hundred thousand dollars," she said, "and you will have

the old house on Stuyvesant Square. This, with what you already possess, will give you all the income we have ever used. And I know my girls feel that they have had the best this world offers." We pressed her hands, in the darkness.

"I have settled a hundred thousand on Nellie, and on each of her two children, and left legacies to old friends, and to the 'goodies,' who will, of course, be your special care."

She then proceeded to say that the vast bulk of her fortune was left, in trust, to Helen and to me, to be used in ways she proceeded to explain. "And," she added, joyously, "in another year, Helen, you will be free, and we can begin at once to plan. Perhaps I shall be spared to see the work well on its way.

The fourth year of my stay in Philadelphia I spent, at Aunt Ellen's request, in studying what is called charitable work,—what she calls "our debts to the poor."

I saw Hebrews, Ethical Culture people, Friends, Unitarians, Universalists, the various denominations, Episcopalians and Roman Catholics; and people who took a vicious delight in calling themselves nothing, and in girding at others who were glad to be ranged in the various regiments, in the fight for Humanity; but who were as much to be depended on, when the time came, for good service, as were those who were working under banners.

The intimate knowledge of needs, the concentration of energy, the enthusiasm for good, the patience, and the abiding sense of the

workers, under whatever name, filled me with wonder and admiration.

I found what I supposed to be the nearest to Aunt Ellen's idea in the plan of a Jewish Rabbi. When she heard it, she sent him a check for ten thousand dollars, for his own particular work, with a request that he would run over to New York and confer with her about hers.

Her chief advisers were this Rabbi, the Rector of St. George, and a Catholic priest, much venerated by the poor people of the slums of New York, and by every one else who knew him. These men were to be the Advisory Committee for Helen and me, when we should need one.

The plan included a park, with spacious and lofty homes for the workingmen, a kindergarten,

and manual-training schools for the children, a high and wholesome place of amusement, a library and reading room, a hospital, a convalescents' home, and one for the aged and infirm and disabled ; and last, but not least, big, big, big bath houses. And the charities which Aunt Ellen had already fostered were not forgotten. Helen asked to be allowed to look after her beloved College Settlements, and I had a pet or two. Aunt Ellen smiled and said, " After I do as I please, you are to do as you please ; there will be plenty for each."

In Philadelphia, in the Debateable Land of want and wretchedness, where the rich and the poor meet together, and the Lord is the Maker of them all, I saw many gracious people, with large minds, with free hearts, with sweet and

natural and kindly ways—even with Historic names, even from the Sacred Precincts.

A fiend is at mine elbow, and whispers, "Jane, or good Jane, or good Jane Van Rensselaer! how would it have been had you met these people in their own drawing-rooms?"

To which I answer, "Fiend, I don't know."

In April, Helen received her parchment amid the applause of her many friends. I felt sorry to lose Miss Alden, but I meant to see much of her in the future, while life should last.

When we were leaving Philadelphia, as the train rolled out of Broad Street Station, Dr. Van Rensselaer said regretfully, "I have finished the four happiest years of my life."

I quoted from Aunt Ellen, "Philadelphians are clannish, and hard to become acquainted

with, but when you know them they are lovely.”

Dear souls! How you would have scintillated in the days of Methuselah! After eight hundred years or so of acquaintance, how adorable you must be! But in this *fin de siècle* age, really, there isn't time to discover your worth. So sorry! Good-bye!

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